

REMEMBERING CHARLES PARKER

ALMIGHTY GOD, SOURCE

OF ALL MERCY AND GIVER OF COMFORT. DEAL GRACIOUSLY WE PRAY WITH THOSE OF US WHO MOURN, THAT, CASTING ALL OUR SORROW ON YOU, WE MAY KNOW THE CONSOLATION OF YOUR LOVE: THROUGH OUR LOVE FOR ONE ANOTHER MAY YOU BUILD US UP and Lift our Spirits as we remember Charles Parker together. AMEN.

READ JOANNAS LETTER.

There is so much in that short email. Please remember those words. It reminds us that this is a process and that today is an important part of that process and she invites us here and to her home for a reason. It's not just a formality.

We are gathered together here today to memorialize and to remember the life and the love of Charles Parker. That is what we will do here today. But there is so much more that happens before we arrive. We don't just show up here with nothing. What do we bring? Well, On the surface we bring flowers and cards, and words of condolences and those are all loving gestures that are greatly appreciated. but there is so much more, so much more we have invested in this day. Before we even arrive here. There is a personal history with Grandpa Charlie, or Dad, or friend, or Charles Parker who merges our lives paths now. And although we have our own unique relationship to him we are still united now by him. Really, He brings us here. BUT NOW what. **What happens while we are here together, and what happens when we leave here today?**

We are surrounded by images and signs of his life, his character and his achievements That help us connect and understand who he was and yes who he still is to us. These items and photos, help us to understand how life seemed to change all around him and we can imagine more about how his spirit developed and where he has been. We gain insight into the Hills and valleys of his life With and with out us. BUT, What we really bring are those precious moments that you have each personally **spent** with him that are really the greatest source of comfort and joy and thanksgiving. I believe this so strongly in my heart, and I know you agree, but I mis-speak when I use the word **Spent**, because the time that you have personally shared can not be spent away. **The value is far greater.**

Those memories are forever. Your individual connection because of that **precious time** you have shared with him remains forever. So It can not be spent. You can refer back to it again and again especially at a time like this we pull that currency back out of our pockets, out of our **memory bank** for comfort, for joy, and even for understanding. Maybe that's why we call it a memory bank. These memories beyond photos are the real **priceless currency** that gets us through these difficult times, We need to pull those memories out now and hold them. Hold them with out fear of spending them away. We need to share them with each other as stories and not worry about what piece of emotion clings to them on the way out. I say we can't spend them. In fact **they grow** as we share them with each other. So that is how we invest in our loved ones. So today we are here to remember together and increase that currency for and with each other. **So that is what happens here today. THESE MEMORIES ARE NOT SPENT THEY ARE THE SAVINGS ACCOUNT THAT WE INCREASE AS WE PULL THEM OUT OF THE PAST AND SHARE THEM WITH EACH OTHER. His loved ones.**

What about when we leave here. What about tomorrow. Creating new memories for the future may not seem so difficult, especially right now, when we realize how valuable they are, the importance of creating and sharing time together, seems more obvious to us now. But just like currency, it requires effort to obtain.

We have put everything on pause here today to take the time to reflect on these things, but What happens when we leave here and our busy schedule relentlessly tugs on us again, with school and work, and the tasks of every day life. Making time for each other and the creation of these memories in the midst of all that is the Effort needed to obtain, this most valuable currency. Will we remember How we feel now when we are faced with the decision, *(busy schedule vs. precious time together)* I am convicted in this, as I see friends here for the first time in way too long. Will we remember to prepare for times such as these by making the time and investing in memories with each other. So joy, peace and thanksgiving will be the rewarding thoughts we retain in times such as these. So before another tomorrow like this one arrives and it will, Will we continue to remember what Joanna told us about her father in her email. What did he say?

“Tomorrow will be Better. It has to be.”

As we ourselves move on in this changing world and try to remain steady and we face those hills and valleys without the physical presence of Charles Parker, We may still be tempted to ask ourselves, **Why did he leave us.** Let’s remember to ask the real question instead. The question that contains his legacy within the answer, **not why did he leave us,** but **what did he leave us with.** We have those memories. Memories that will always be with you as undepletable currency because you made the precious time to be together. As we share memories of those times together, he continues to live with us and that currency is not expendable. He lives and we live when we share that with each other with all of its emotions attached, and I pray that we will continue to live that way long after we leave here today. Because life, *(we are reminded)* is a precious and growing currency, a gift from God. And it is most precious because we share our time with each other and create and recreate new memories upon memories so that when our loved ones pass on, we are enriched with the precious memories, **our most valuable currency,** our best 401K plan because these days will find us again and when they do, we are prepared, and rich in loving memory, Which is the answer to the real question. What did Charles Parker leave us with. Let us carry his Legacy forward.

LIFE WILL BE BETTER IT HAS TO BE”

Now is the time to recall those priceless memories and to share them for his sake and your own. So we would really love to hear some of those songs and stories.

OPEN TO STORIES

ONE LAST THING BEFORE WE MOVE ON.

Life is such a precious gift from God, SHARE TIME together making memories for the future. That is really what was priceless to Charles, and why he could be released from this world, and that is why you can release him now because you know you did spend precious time together singing and laughing and just enjoying each others company.
FINAL PRAYER AFTER.

Almighty God. We give you heartfelt thanks for the grace you have bestowed upon Charles Parker your humble servant who now rests with you in joy and blessedness safely away from the labors and pains of this world. We thank you Lord for helping us to find the precious time to be with him, and allowing time for us to know and to love him as a companion, a husband, a father a Grandpa and an example of your constant steadfast love in an ever changing busy world. Give us your aid now so we may see in death the gate to eternal life, that we may continue our course on earth lovingly building up memories through precious time spent together in confidence until, by your call

WE are reunited with him and all those who have gone before us. We gratefully pray this in your Holy and precious name.

Amen